



NEWS RELEASE

DEFENSE FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING SERVICE

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Press Release 02-04

January 15, 2001

For External Release

Easing travel pay woes

DFAS and AKO partner to increase customer service

Army customers now have a new tool to help manage travel claims.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service and Army Knowledge Online have established a partnership to smooth out some of the bumps in getting travel settlements filed and paid.

"When an Army customer submits a travel voucher," said DFAS officials, "An e-mail will be generated and sent to the traveler's Army Knowledge Online account."

That notice will tell the customer that the claim has been received and will be settled within seven work days. This notice will be received only when DFAS computes the travel settlement. Most Army travelers fit this category.

A second notification includes the amount paid, date paid and portion of the payment sent to the bank. This notification will be received for all settlements paid by DFAS.

The System and Procedures Directorate developed the project at DFAS Operating Forces, DFAS – Indianapolis, with input from the AKO project office and DFAS Travel Pay Services.

A prototype was tested in October, using the DFAS Orlando customer base. The system is now in use at all DFAS Indianapolis network travel offices.

Benefits of the service include:

- o Increased customer service -- The traveler is notified of voucher receipt and payment
- o Reduced number of call-ins -- The customer receives information directly and doesn't need to make calls to check status
- o Reduced uncertainty -- If the traveler doesn't receive notification within 7 days after mailing, a number is available to check status (number?).

Customer feedback has been positive so far.

"For what it's worth," said one customer, "I like what I see with this change. I like the confirmation that the voucher has been completed. Somebody from DFAS has cracked the code regarding customer focus! Your efforts are appreciated."

Secretary of the Army Thomas E. White has mandated that all active and reserve soldiers and all DA civilians register for an account with AKO.

All Army Knowledge Online users receive an e-mail account they can use for the rest of their career, even after retirement. The e-mail address will stay the same no matter where soldiers and civilians are stationed worldwide, according to AKO officials.

AKO provides secure access to users to access personnel and financial information tailored to the individual.

For more information, contact DFAS Corporate Communications at (317) 510-2163, e-mail chuck.gordon@dfas.mil, or check the following websites:

- o AKO -- https://www.us.army.mil/portal/portal_home.jhtml
- o DFAS website -- <http://www.dfas.mil>